

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested.

The allowance of claims 18-20 and the provisional allowance of dependent claims 5-7 is appreciatively noted.

Claim 1 has now been amended so as to incorporate the additional limitations of provisionally allowed dependent claim 5. This leaves the remaining claims 3, 4 and 6-17 also in allowable form.

New independent claim 21 corresponds to provisionally allowed dependent claim 6 rewritten in independent format thus leaving it and new dependent claims 22-26 in allowable form.

New independent claim 27 corresponds to provisionally allowed dependent claim 7 now rewritten in independent format and thus it is also in allowable form.

New claims 28-32 incorporate, inter alia, the feature of provisionally allowed claim 6 and are thus also believed to be in allowable condition.

New independent method claims 33-40 are analogous to now allowable apparatus claims 1, 21, 27 and 28-32 respectively. Accordingly, these new method claims are also believed to be in allowable form.

KAWAI et al.
Appl. No. 09/739,335
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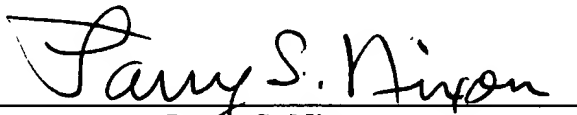
The rejection of claims 1-4, 8-9, 11-17 under 35 U.S.C. §102 as allegedly anticipated by Trissel et al. '320 is respectfully traversed. However, since this ground of rejection has now been mooted by the above amendment, it is not believed necessary to further discuss it at this time.

Similarly, the rejection of claims 1 and 10 under 35 U.S.C. 103 as allegedly being made "obvious" based on Bird et al. '831 in view of Trissel is also respectfully traversed. However, since this ground of rejection has also been mooted by the above amendment, it is also not believed necessary to further comment on grounds for such traversal at this time.

Accordingly, this entire application is now believed to be in condition for allowance and a formal Notice to that effect is respectfully solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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